

Message Text

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15

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 PA-01 USIA-06

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R 030715Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4442

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 0402

E. E. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, UR, LU

SUBJECT: USSR-LUXEMBOURG AIR AGREEMENT

1. ON JUNE 2 PIERRE HAMER, DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION. CONFIRMED TO ECON OFFICER PRESS REPORTS THAT CIVIL AIR AGREEMENT WITH USSR HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND WILL BE SIGNED FORMALLY DURING THE GRAND DUKE'S VISIT TO MOSCOW JUNE 5. ACCORDING TO HAMER, THE AGREEMENT CALLS FOR ONCE WEEKLY PASSENGER/FREIGHT FLIGHTS BY AEROFLOT BETWEEN MOSCOW AND LUXEMBOURG. LUXAIR, THE LUXEMBOURG NATIONAL CARRIER HAS SIMILAR RIGHTS FOR ONCE WEEKLY FLIGHTS TO MOSCOW BUT WILL NOT EXERCISE THESE RIGHTS AT THIS TIME. HAMER SAID THAT THE AGREEMENT, FROM THE RUSSIAN POINT OF VIEW, HAD TO BE UNECONOMICAL AND THAT HE BELIEVED LUXEMBOURG HAD MADE LAST-MINUTE CONCESSIONS (I.E., ALLOWING PASSENGER FLIGHTS) FOR POLITICAL REASONS.

2. CHARLES REICHLING, DIRECTOR OF INTERNAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND THE CHIEF LUXEMBOURG NEGOTIATOR, ALSO CONFIRMED TO ECON OFFICER THAT LUXAIR OBTAINED RIGHTS TO OVERFLY TASHKENT, AND THAT LUXAIR WILL DO SO UNDER CHARTER TO CARGOLUX, THE LUXEMBOURG BASED CARGO CARRIER THAT IS ONE-THIRD OWNED BY LUXAIR. REICHLING DENIED PRESS REPORTS
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THAT AEROFLOT WOULD FLY ONWARD FROM LUXEMBOURG TO AFRICA.

HE ALSO ADMITTED THAT THE MOSCOW-LUXEMBOURG ROUTE WAS UNLIKELY TO BE PROFITABLE IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND THAT HE ESTIMATED THAT THE LOAD FACTOR DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION WOULD BE ABOUT TWENTY PERCENT. AEROFLOT WILL COMMENCE FLIGHTS JULY 2 WITH A 68 PASSENGER TUPOLEV THREE ENGINE JET.

3. COMMENT: AS LATE AS MAY 26 REICHLING WAS DOWNPLAYING THE POSSIBILITY OF FINALIZING THE AGREEMENT DURING NEGOTIATIONS THEN BEING HELD. REICHLING HAD BEEN HOLDING OUT FOR A CARGO AGREEMENT ONLY. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT ADMIT IT, WE BELIEVE REICHLING MAY HAVE BEEN TOLD BY FORIEGN MINISTER THORN TO WRAP UP THE AGREEMENT BEFORE THE GRAND DUKE'S VISIT EVEN IF IT MEANT COMPROMISING ON CERTAIN POINTS. IN ADDITION, GOL HAS OFTEN EXPRESSED INTEREST IN INCREASING NUMBER OF FLIGHTS INTO LUXEMBOURG FROM EUROPEAN CAPITALS AND MAY HAVE MADE PASSENGER CONCESSIONS TO GET THIS SERVICE. FARKAS

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